



NEWSLETTER July 2023

www.lancasterramblers.org.uk

contributions to Gareth Thomas
newsletter@lancasterramblers.org.uk

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Registered office: The Ramblers, 1 Clink Street, 3rd Floor, London SE1 9DG.

Group Secretary vacancy

I resigned as Lancaster Group Secretary at the 2022 AGM. To date there have been no offers to take over the role. The job itself is not too arduous, the core duties being:

- Arranging meetings, including the AGM, booking rooms, sending out invitations, organising catering and other arrangements (we already have a Minute Secretary),
- Making sure that all records are kept up to date and safe,
- Receiving and acting on correspondence (email and post),
- Keeping in touch with Ramblers' offices, sharing news, including key organisational policies, with the group committee and groups.

If you think you could assist the Group by becoming Secretary, please let me know at secretary@lancasterramblers.org.uk. I am happy to discuss any aspect of the role, without obligation.

David Johnson
secretary@lancasterramblers.org.uk

This newsletter is available at
www.lancasterramblers.org.uk/information/group/newsletter.

Please send walk and trek reports, path news, personal news, and any other contributions (with photographs if possible) for the next newsletter to Gareth (newsletter@lancasterramblers.org.uk).

Alzheimer's Society half marathon



I would like to give a huge thank you to everyone who sponsored me on my 13 mile half marathon trek on behalf of the Alzheimer's Society. I managed to raise £950 which will be a great help to the society.

The walk started at Patterdale cricket club and followed the Ullswater Way ending at Penrith on what was probably the hottest day of the year.

Thanks again

Joan Bundy

Footpath work in Scotforth

Following Lancaster Ramblers footpath collaboration with Scotforth Parish Council in 2022, as reported previously in the Newsletter, the association continued this year. At the end of March, three members of the maintenance team, Mary Garner, Alan Jones and Neil Herbert, along with a member of Scotforth Parish Council, Sue Aspinall, surveyed the four Scotforth footpaths. There used to be 6 but one short path was upgraded to a road and another became a Lancaster path following a boundary change. Neil Herbert wrote a report following the survey, with photographs, for the PC.

We identified 2 locations (on FPs 3 and 6) where a way-mark would be useful, one “mess” where a new stile/gate is required (FP6) and a slippery stile (in the wet) where a wire covering was desirable (FP4 off Langthwaite Road). The “mess” was reported to LCC since it is beyond our current capabilities to renew. At the end of June, following agreement with the parish council, and on a wet day unfortunately, the other jobs were completed. Waymarks were added and Brian Jones and Neil Herbert covered the slippery wooden stile step with wire netting, firmly attached with staples and large head tacks. The wet conditions at least allowed us to try it out.

Neil Herbert



New wire netting on a step on Langthwaite Road

Claughton Bricks

A recent walk along the ridge at Caton Moor from Bull Beck took us on the stony track past the clay quarry that feeds Claughton brick works alongside the A683.

Our group stopped when the driver of a pick-up vehicle wound down his window and invited us for a look at the quarry. Going through the gates and up the road, you can see that this is more of a large shallow depression in the hill than a normal quarry and that the aerial ropeway, which everyone sees from the road, has gradually extended back into the hill during the hundred years of the excavations here. A digger piles up the clay behind the terminus of the ropeway. Not all the buckets are filled. There are 37 of them. The site has been allowed to continue until 2036 because the company can return used ground to its natural boggy state afterwards.

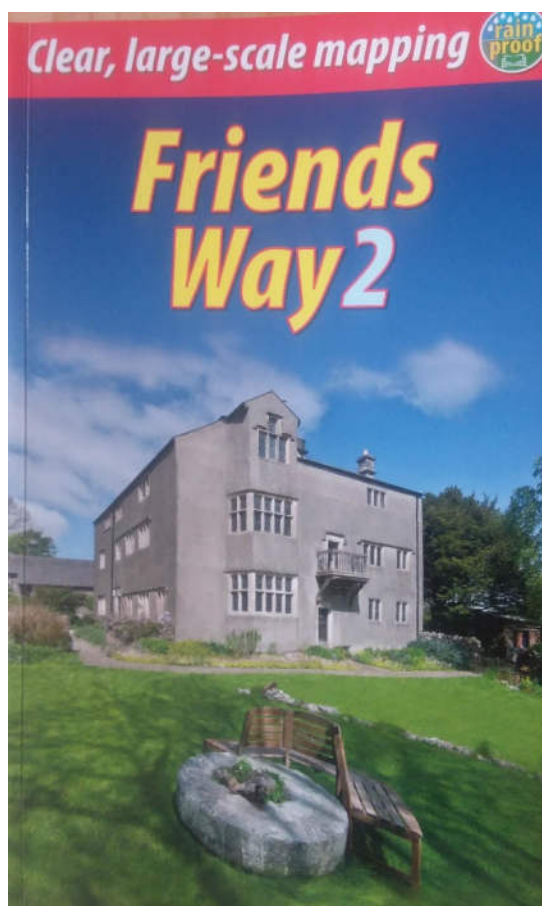


A thirty-minute glimpse and lots of questions made an unusual break in what was already an interesting walk. Thank you Claughton Bricks.

Don Walker

The Friends Way book launch

Part 2 of the Friends Way guide book was launched on Saturday 20th May at the Swarthmoor Quaker Meeting House in Ulverston. Lancaster Ramblers were invited to join the event which consisted of a self guided walk, afternoon tea and the book launch itself. Sixteen of us attended.



It felt like the first day of summer. I'd shed 2 out of 3 layers before we arrived in Ulverston! Our walk took us up onto Birkrigg Common where we stopped for coffee whilst enjoying spectacular views over Morecambe Bay and the Lake District fells. Then onwards to explore the stone circle. Catherine had done some research and told us all about the circle's age. After a walk in the woods we arrived at Sunbrick Quaker burial ground, the site of Margaret Fox's grave. Then back onto the common for lunch and more views. We returned to Ulverston by grassy lanes edged with masses of wildflowers. Finally, a tour of the gardens at Swarthmoor Hall, where Margaret Fox lived, before returning

to the Meeting House along the river and through the woods.

The afternoon tea was delicious ... and very big! I think most of us packed up the huge slice of cake to take home for later. Some of us ate our tea in the Meeting House gardens. Some took the guided tour of the Meeting House itself.



Swarthmoor Hall

At 4pm the book launch was introduced by Jacquetta Megarry from the publishing company. Martin Budgett, the author, gave a bit of background to preparing the walk. The main speaker at the event was Professor Ben Pink Dandelion. As well as giving a lot of background to Margaret Fox's role as the "Mother of Quakerism", Ben explained how he had come by his somewhat unusual name!



Swarthmoor Quaker Meeting House

Friends Way Part 2 details a 7-day long-distance walk from Sedbergh to Ulverston following in part the footsteps of George Fox. As well as detailed maps, the book gives plenty of background to the Quaker movement itself.

Judy Steele

Mentoring programme

Lancaster Ramblers started a mentoring programme for new leaders at the end of last year. It has been a great success so far with 8 potential leaders signing up to it. Most of those have now gone on to lead great walks.

The programme works by matching a new leader to a more experienced leader who acts as mentor throughout the process. The mentor will help with planning the walk, going through the risk assessment, going on the recce and accompanying the leader on at least their first walk. After that, it's up to the new leader if they require more assistance.

If you'd like to join in and become a leader, please email me at walks@lancasterramblers.org.uk.

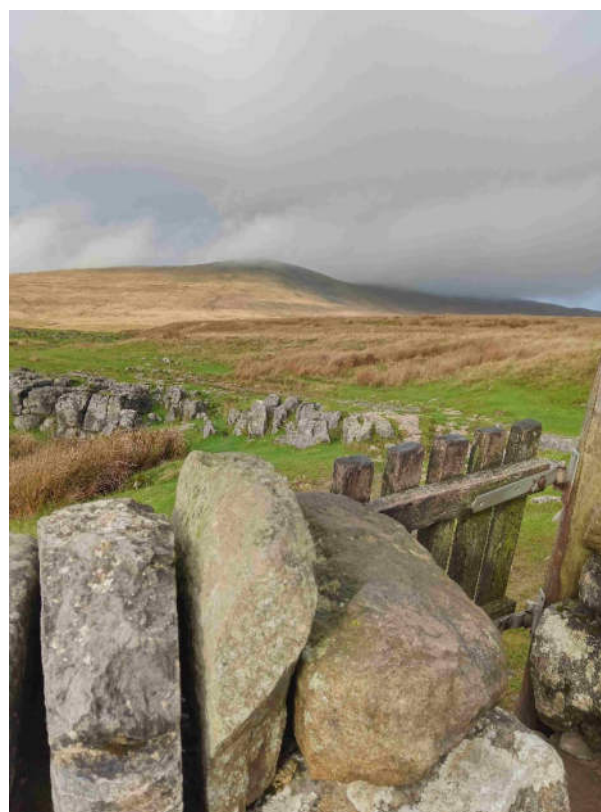
Judy Steele

Becoming a Ramblers walk leader

I love getting out into the countryside for a long walk, but with a full-time job and young children it isn't always that easy. I started walking with the Ramblers in 2021, it's so convenient to just head to the meeting place on the day when you can make it.

The group size was relatively small and everyone is very friendly. On my second walk, Judy (walks programme organiser) asked if I'd thought about becoming a walk leader. She told me about the mentoring programme that meant I'd have one-to-one support in planning a walk, developing my map-reading skills and undertaking the recce. Once I'd signed up to join the Ramblers, I signed up for the mentoring programme too.

Sue was my allocated mentor and having decided I wanted to do a walk up Ingleborough from Ingleton, we identified a time when we could go for a recce. During the recce I took lots of photos and notes to help ensure I really knew the walk details. One thing I'd not considered before that recce was the importance of planning for alternatives should the need arise, for example if the weather deteriorates. It started to rain on Thieves Moss and by the time we got back to Ingleton we were rather wet!



Ingleborough

It was a few months before I was able to get the walk on the programme – 18 February was convenient for me and Sue. Unfortunately, the weather was inclement and after stopping for morning refreshments at Gaping Gill, looking at the cloud on Ingleborough, after a brief chat we decided to take an alternative route and stay low. It was very wet underfoot but at least I wasn't leading a group in dense cloud and wind.

Determined to lead my planned walk, we identified a date in June. This time the weather was fine and although only a few people came we completed the walk without any issues. It did start raining on Thieves Moss, but it was only a shower.

Next, I intend to plan a new walk. I know Sue will be happy to help as long as I would like her support. The Lancaster Ramblers mentoring programme is a great initiative and I'd recommend it to anyone who would like to lead walks but doesn't feel totally confident about doing so.

Paul Marren

The Ramblers will put you right

The year started well with an email invitation from Judy to a Leaders' Day on Jan 28th at Slyne Memorial Hall. I thought can I do this? I am happy I went. The room was organised with a place for me with Judy and Sheila (I belonged already). One task was to plot 3 routes of different lengths on given OS printouts. I really enjoyed that and tried to make each route as interesting as possible. This was the beginning of my renewed love of maps.

Sheila bravely offered to be my mentor and gave me her landline number. I was ridiculously hesitant to call as it was the home phone but I needn't have worried, Sheila called me and set me the task of planning a Wednesday walk.



At the same time, I was invited to recce a walk with Sue Rin in Sedburgh. A good learning experience as Sue shared her thoughts on planning the walk with me. I now felt I should have enough knowledge to recce a walk for myself. I hadn't done much path work. As a family we used to climb up, walk down and go home. Rambling was very different as you can't see where you are going! Out came walking maps!

I chose somewhere familiar and tried to make the route interesting and varied with the important coffee and lunch stops with sitting place and a view.

My first attempt at a route ended up too long. Maybe, with more confidence, I should have stuck with it but I looked at the map again and I began to chop and change the route and made it into two walks of different lengths. I did enjoy

the challenge and with 3 recces, it quickly made me very familiar with the map and area.



I would like to thank Sheila. I have learned a lot from my mentor and am eternally grateful to her for taking me on, doing the recce with me and giving me absolutely the right amount of constant, timely nudges, support and guidance in the right direction! I will keep asking questions but Sheila's shared wisdom has given me knowledge to feel pretty confident and I know I can ask if I'm not sure.



If anyone is thinking "I wonder if I could do that"? Talk to a walk leader about it and maybe have a go! It makes me smile and I can't recommend it enough. I once said to a work colleague "I want to walk long distance paths but have no idea how". He said "Join the Ramblers, they'll put you right"..... and you did!

Val Morgan

Being a new leader mentor

At last year's Leaders' Day, Judy had cleverly mixed potential leaders and experienced leaders together in her seating plan. When Val, at the same table as me, put up her hand as wanting a mentor, it made sense for me to offer. I had already been impressed by the walk she had designed in one of the exercises and by what she had noted as good features of a route. We exchanged contact details and promised to be in touch.

Time passed and after a while I emailed Val with a little nudge. I may even have done this twice, but if I did it was the last service I rendered because she proved to be altogether competent already. There was a bit of back and forth emailing of a route because she wanted to shorten it. I believe that to be a good mentor, because this route was quite local, I should have walked it through at this point. I didn't make the time.

From the start Val knew what she was doing. I suggested a change (because I hadn't done my recce) and she went along with it which I don't think she should have done.

She should have stuck to her guns which she did later when I was politely trying to convince her she was going wrong and she knew, just as politely, that she was right. I don't think she "bought" my explanation that I was testing her!

Things I should have done with Val were look at potential coffee and lunch stops. These are always difficult to gauge because you don't know the speed of your group, and it's useful to have extra ideas. Also, where there was road walking I should have reminded her that the leader needs to caution the group and go through the 'rules'. We can feel nanny-ish doing this and as a mentor I should have emphasised it as being a duty. There are pointers in group management a mentor might suggest; and after all, the new leader has asked for this. If I had recce'd the route I might have made a mental note of some of these.

In the event, along with the rest of the group, I thoroughly enjoyed Val's first walk as leader and look forward to more.

Sheila Jones

Macmillan Mighty Hike Jurassic Coast

Most of you will already know that in 2021 I had both breast cancer and lung cancer. Last year, my lifetime friend John died of cancer. I wanted to help raise money for Macmillan Cancer Support and so have signed up to walk the half marathon on the Jurassic coast near Weymouth in September this year.

If you'd like to support me in raising £500 for this charity, please follow the link www.justgiving.com/fundraising/judysteele2023.

Thank you

Judy Steele



Story Tasting Garden Restoration

The Spacehive platform for collecting funds is at spacehive.com/recreating-the-tasting-garden-artwork.

Hum, Holler 'n' Sing are giving a fundraising concert in the Story auditorium at 7.30 pm on 13 July.

£5.50 per ticket from Lancaster/Morecambe Visitors Information Centres or uk.patronbase.com/_VICticketbox/Productions

Sue Pope